

Secret Court Said to Grant Every Request to Bug Spies

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A secret court, created as a watchdog on government spying, has granted every government request to use wiretaps, bugs and other electronic surveillance in foreign intelligence cases, according to sources.

During nine months of work, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court has never turned the government down, said a knowledgeable source who requested anonymity.

But this source said the applications, and the court-approved warrants, number fewer than 100 and are running at about the same level as a few years ago when such surveillance required no court review.

Some dubious eavesdropping proposals are turned down in the spy agencies themselves and by the Justice Department before they reach the court, several government officials said.

"We don't present a case we think is going to be denied," said Kenneth C. Bass, who is Attorney General Benja-

min Civiletti's counsel for intelligence policy.

The seven-judge court was created in 1978 legislation designed to prevent a recurrence of the intelligence abuses disclosed in the 1970s. That statute, for the first time, required court warrants for electronic eavesdropping by the FBI in investigations of foreign spies in the United States. For more than 10 years, warrants have been required for electronic surveillance in criminal investigations.

Because of the extreme secrecy of foreign spy cases, Congress established the special court to handle foreign intelligence warrants.

The Carter administration has asked Congress to give the court the power to authorize intelligence agents to open mail and break into homes and offices in spy investigations.

Critics have said the court would be little more than a rubber stamp for the government and that the unusual secrecy of its proceedings would prevent it from being accountable to the public.